

help to reduce the over-reliance on incarceration for the addicted. We must do all that we can to maximize the impact of drug courts across the Nation.

I applaud the work that the Maryland Drug Treatment Court Commission is doing and I congratulate all of the dedicated drug court professionals and graduates from Maryland and around the country.

#### EARMARK DECLARATION

**HON. JOHN R. CARTER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to submit documentation consistent with the new Republican Earmark Standards.

Requesting Member: Congressman JOHN R. CARTER.

Bill Number: H.R. 5658—The Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009.

Account: Military Construction, Army.

Legal Name of Receiving Entity: Fort Hood, TX.

Address of Receiving Entity: U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Hood, Bldg. 1001, Rm W321, Fort Hood, TX 75544.

Description of Request: I have secured \$18,288,000 in authorization funding in H.R. 5658 in the Military Construction, Army account for a Chapel with Religious Education Center project at Fort Hood, TX.

This project will construct a standard design chapel complex and religious education center. Primary facilities include a chapel complex, religious education center, administrative area, conference rooms, library, multipurpose activity area, kitchen and storage areas, fire alarm and fire suppression systems, connection to Installation Energy Management Control System (ECMS), and building information systems. Special foundations are required due to the expansive soils. Supporting facilities include electrical, water, sanitary sewer, and natural gas utilities; storm drainage; chilled water distribution; paving, walks, curbs and gutters; security lighting, information systems; landscaping and site improvements. Heating will be provided by self-contained natural gas units. Access for the handicapped will be provided. Comprehensive Interior Design package is required. Anti-terrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) measures include mass notification system, structural reinforcement, special doors and windows, high curbing, and other measures to maintain stand-off distance.

Fort Hood, Texas is a strategic installation for the Army. This project was programmed to receive funding in Fiscal Year 2012, but was identified by the garrison commander as the highest unfunded priority in Fiscal Year 2009. The project is necessary to improve psychological and spiritual care for the soldiers and their families.

Military Construction projects are always 100% funded by the U.S. Federal government so there is no opportunity for matching funds.

#### DUNCAN HUNTER NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOE BACA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 21, 2008*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5658) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2009 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2009, and for other purposes:

Mr. BACA. Mr. Chairman, I stand here in support of H.R. 5658, the Duncan Hunter Defense Authorization Act of FY 2009.

Just a few months ago, we reflected on the 5-year anniversary of this war. Today we send a message to our troops that we are with them.

This bill authorizes additional funds for the needs of our troops overseas, and more importantly will authorize a pay raise larger than that requested by the President.

During these hard economic times of recession, foreclosures, and high gas prices, our military families need all our help and support. This bill prohibits fee increases in TRICARE and expands available health care services.

This bill is a step in the right direction, with directives for the Afghanistan conflict, and more accountability of the Iraqi government and contractors.

Today we make our commitment to the Americans we represent, and their sons, daughters, husbands, wives, sisters and brothers serving as part of the Armed Forces. They are fighting a war that is not their fight.

In my district alone, 13 families will sit at their dinner table without a loved one. To these families in my district and those throughout the Nation, I thank you for your service, your sacrifice and your love for this Nation. You are the back bone of the Armed Forces.

I urge my colleagues to keep our commitment to our troops, redirect this war in the right direction and vote for H.R. 5658.

#### INTRODUCTION OF FAIRNESS IN NURSING HOME ARBITRATION ACT

**HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Fairness in Nursing Home Arbitration Act of 2008 to protect one of our most vulnerable groups: the elderly. This legislation is designed to make unenforceable all pre-dispute, mandatory binding arbitration clauses in contracts between long-term care facilities and their residents. Let me be clear: I am supportive of the principles of arbitration, so this legislation will not prohibit arbitration. Instead, it will simply ensure that residents have the choice whether to arbitrate a dispute after it has arisen.

The Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law, which I chair, has held three hearings this term on issues related to the

Federal Arbitration Act. During these hearings, witnesses testified that many businesses utilize arbitration agreements to the disadvantage of consumers by limiting constitutional rights, imposing unreasonable costs, and creating a system in which consumers are likely to lose even when they file a valid claim.

The long-term care industry is one stark example where businesses draft take-it-or-leave-it admission agreements for prospective residents that include pre-dispute mandatory arbitration clauses. A witness at the Subcommittee's October 25, 2007 hearing on H.R. 3010, the Arbitration Fairness Act of 2007, testified that the "current system of binding mandatory arbitration employed by nursing homes creates a playing field that is tilted in favor of nursing homes and against frail, vulnerable residents who suffer terribly at the hands of their caregivers. Sadly these residents are, all too often, the victims of abuse by their caregivers. They should not be further abused by an arbitration system that dispenses anything but justice."

After hearing several stories of abhorrent conditions in nursing homes and how arbitration clauses have effectively silenced residents who want to improve those conditions, I am introducing this legislation to make unenforceable pre-dispute mandatory arbitration clauses and to restore to residents and their families their full legal rights. Residents and their families will no longer have to worry about losing their right to a jury trial when they are going through the emotional and traumatic process of searching for long-term care facilities and then choosing the perfect one. I understand the emotional toll and the sense of vulnerability when moving a loved one and his belongings into the care of strangers at a nursing home. My father was recently placed into a nursing home, and one of the last things I wanted to worry about was whether he was forgoing his legal rights when he entered it. Instead, I wanted to focus solely on the quality and range of services the facility would provide him. This legislation will allow families and residents to retain their legal rights while they look for that perfect long-term care facility.

Several groups, including the AARP, the Alzheimer's Association, the National Senior Citizens Law Center, and many others who advocate on behalf of the elderly and consumers, support this legislation. Already a similar bipartisan bill has been introduced in the Senate. I am optimistic that Congress can soon send a bill to the President for his signature so that nursing home residents will retain their choice whether to arbitrate a dispute.

I urge my colleagues to join me, Representatives ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, JOHN CONYERS, HANK JOHNSON, DENNIS KUCINICH, and WILLIAM DELAHUNT, and take the important step of co-sponsoring this bipartisan legislation.

#### TRIBUTE TO MEGHAN NORTH LAMPO

**HON. DENNIS MOORE**

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a young constituent whose life tragically ended way too early, as the result of an automobile accident.

Meghan North Lampo of Fairway, Kansas, was killed on May 15, 2008, in an automobile accident in Overland Park, Kansas. She was born on February 12, 1979, in Kansas City, Missouri. She was a graduate of St. Paul's Episcopal Day School and St. Theresa's Academy. Meghan earned a bachelor of arts in Japanese studies at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, and spent her junior year in Morioka, Japan. She was a student ambassador to Kansas City's sister city in Kurashiki, Japan, a Rotary International scholar in Myaboshi, Japan, and participated in the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme, a Japanese governmental program in Nagano, Japan.

Meghan was a beautiful young woman who loved people from every walk of life and has been described as a creative and free spirit who loved and lived life to the fullest. She described herself as someone who colored outside the lines in order to make a masterpiece. She had boundless energy and her own sense of style, a strong will, a huge heart, and a desire to help others in any way she could. Meghan particularly enjoyed volunteering for Bacchus Foundation, a philanthropic, social and service organization which introduces and integrates young adults into Kansas City's civic, cultural and educational communities. As Meghan said, "A little sparkle goes a long way these days." She is survived by many friends and her family, including her mother, Jane Lampo and stepfather, Rick Welsch, of Fairway, and her father Joe Lampo of Little Rock, Arkansas.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to pay tribute to a very special young constituent whose life was tragically snuffed out when she was much too young. I thank you for this opportunity and I know that all members of the House of Representatives join with me in paying tribute to Meghan North Lampo.

#### HONORING EARLIE MAYS

#### HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Earlie Mays, who is retiring from his position as International Representative of the United Auto Workers, Region 5, after 31 years of exemplary service. Earlie has been based in Fremont, California, through much of his career in the labor movement. I have been privileged over the years to work with him on issues of importance to working men and women.

Upon his graduation from high school in 1963, Earlie enrolled in Laney Junior College in Oakland, California, and soon thereafter he was hired at Oakland's General Motors Plant (GM). He always had a great love for the Auto Workers' Union and was fiercely dedicated to workers' rights. He also had a great thirst for knowledge with a goal of promoting the welfare of others. In 1970, Earlie took a leave of absence from GM and attended the UC Berkeley Institute of Industrial Relations, where he earned a certificate in Labor Studies. Immediately upon receiving his certificate, he was recruited by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees'

National Union to organize and service its Northern California local unions. During this period, Earlie honed his skills as a negotiator, grievance handler, organizer, and negotiator of collective bargaining agreements.

Earlie returned to GM, which relocated to Fremont, California, and worked himself up through the ranks of labor. He was elected to various positions, including Alternate Committeeman, Executive Board Member at Large, and Chairperson of the Civil Rights Committee. He continued his educational endeavors attending United Auto Worker Summer Schools and the Walter and May Reuther Educational Center in Black Lake, Michigan. He frequently conducted classes for rank and file members in various subjects.

In 1973, Earlie was elected Chairman of the Bargaining Committee of the General Motors Plant in Fremont. In doing so he became the youngest person, as well as the first African-American, to hold that office. His adept bargaining skills earned respect for the UAW.

Earlie served for sixteen years as a Commissioner on the California Prison Board as an appointee of California Governors Jerry Brown and George Deukmejian. He has served as President of the Western Region A. Philip Randolph Institute, as Director of the UAW Regional Civil Rights Program, and as a member of the NAACP and the American Red Cross.

I join the community in thanking Earlie Mays for his exemplary career in labor and his dedication to community service.

#### CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

#### HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Montgomery County Humane Society as it celebrates its 50th anniversary. Our household is fortunate to count Chessie, a golden retriever/yellow Labrador mix, as part of our family, and our entire community is grateful to the Montgomery County Humane Society for providing compassionate animal welfare services in our region for half a century.

Each year, the Montgomery County Humane Society takes in over 10,000 animals and provides assistance to more than 100,000 local citizens. It offers many critically important services in the county such as its nationally renowned Adoption/Foster, Spay-Neuter Programs, as well as the Rescue Partners Program, Lost & Found, 24-Emergency Hotline Services, Safe Haven Program, and Humane Education for both children and adults.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to offer my congratulations and warmest wishes to the Montgomery County Humane Society as it celebrates this important milestone. May it continue to thrive, shelter all needy animals, and find good homes for abandoned animals.

#### SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINE INVESTMENT CONFERENCE IN BETHLEHEM

#### HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, on May 21, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad convened a large gathering of international business leaders in Bethlehem to promote investment in the Palestinian economy. This three-day conference, organized by the Palestinian Authority, is an important milestone on the road to a lasting and secure peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Earlier this week, Congressman RAHM EM-MANUEL, the chairman of the Democratic Caucus, and I participated with Speaker NANCY PELOSI in a Congressional leadership visit to Israel to mark the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the Jewish State. During our time there, we had the opportunity to meet with U.S. diplomatic officials, and my colleague spoke by phone with Palestinian Authority officials to assess the progress of efforts to bring peace to that region.

Following our discussions with Palestinian and American officials, we both express our strong support for the efforts of President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad to chart a course of moderation and tolerance and develop an economy and society that provides hope and opportunity for the Palestinian people. The international community must support efforts, like this investment conference, which are designed to improve the lives of peoples in the region.

Madam Speaker, in this regard, we note our strong appreciation for the participation of business leaders from throughout the region, including Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, and the Arab Gulf states. We express our thanks to the Government of Israel for its efforts to make the conference a success, including by making the travel of so many participants possible. This conference is a demonstration of what is possible in this troubled region when people work together for a common good and reject the forces of extremism.

We express our thanks to major U.S. corporations that have joined the Palestinian Authority in this effort, including Cisco, Intel, Marriott and Coca-Cola. When they create jobs, spur investment, and strengthen communities, these corporations are truly furthering the cause of peace.

Madam Speaker, a recent World Bank report put unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza at more than 23 percent. This young and rapidly expanding labor force presents both an opportunity and a challenge for those of us who seek to promote the cause of peace. If these young people can find jobs, support a family and become part of the global economy, they will be a force for peace. The durability of the bonds between the Israeli and Palestinian business communities is testimony to the power and potential of these relationships.

If however, these young people are forced to rely on Government handouts and the charity of others, they are ripe for exploitation by those with extremist agendas.

Madam Speaker, the Palestinian Authority has begun making some of the difficult